

Clinical Laboratory Update

October 2020

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From the desk of the Public Health Laboratory Director

MHDL offers Flu/COVID multiplex surveillance testing for select sites

Effective November 16, MHDL Laboratory will be able to conduct surveillance testing for designated partner sites utilizing the [CDC's Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 \(Flu SC2\) diagnostic multiplex assay](#). More info on how to submit Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 multiplex test requests will be shared with applicable locations soon. Due to limited resources and supplies, this testing is only available to the surveillance sites and outbreaks at this time. However, we will keep you posted on whether we are able to expand these services to other partners.

CDC updates COVID sampling guidelines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently updated its [Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens for COVID-19](#), which includes more detailed recommendations for collection of nasopharyngeal swabs, nasal mid-turbinate swabs, anterior nares and saliva specimens for SARS-CoV-2 testing.

COVID-19 POC antigen testing guidelines

The Association for State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) recently released an issue brief on [Considerations for Use of Point-of-Care Antigen Testing by State and Territorial Health Agencies](#). Wisconsin's current POC antigen testing guidelines are summarized in [WI DHS COVID-19 Health Alert #17](#).

MHDL's Thanksgiving hours to be announced next week

MHDL is planning its Thanksgiving holiday hours of operations to meet partner needs while balancing staffing considerations. Hours will be communicated with partners the week before Thanksgiving.

Data for COVID-19 testing performed at MHDL during the month of October is included as a supplement to this report.

Links to related information & data:

[MHDL COVID-19 Testing website](#)

[MHDL COVID-19 Situation](#)

[WSLH Laboratory Surveillance Report](#)

Sexually Transmitted Infections

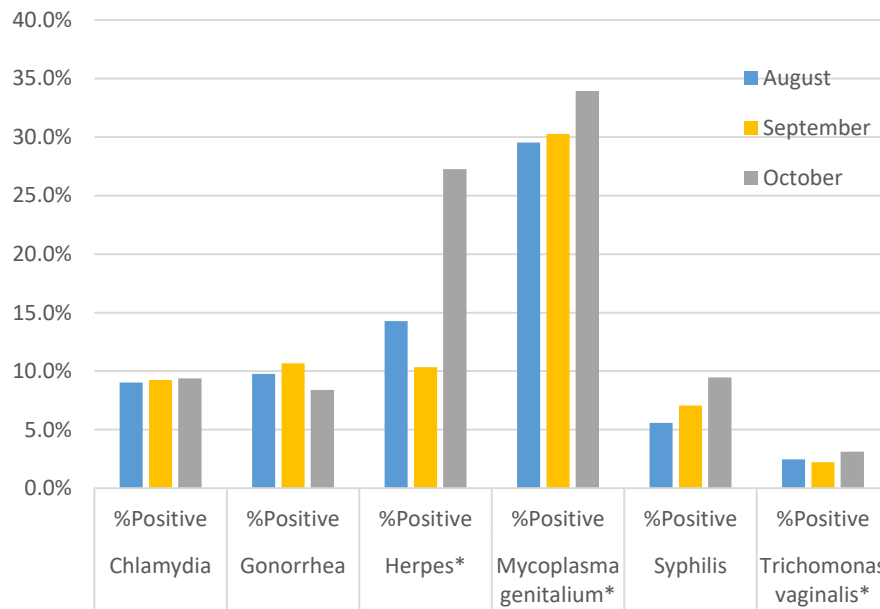


Figure 1: Percent positivity for specimens screened using molecular or serological assays for the given organism.

*Not reportable as per WI DHS 145.04 (3) (a)

Respiratory Infections

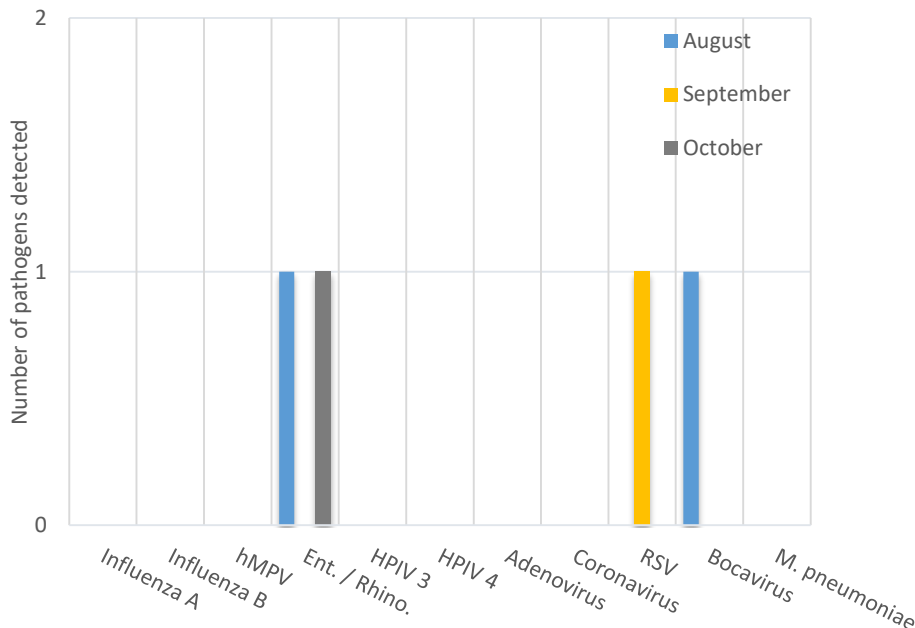


Figure 2: Respiratory pathogens detected using a Respiratory Pathogen Panel (RPP) and/or RT-PCR Influenza assay.

Connect with your health department:



New HIV Infections

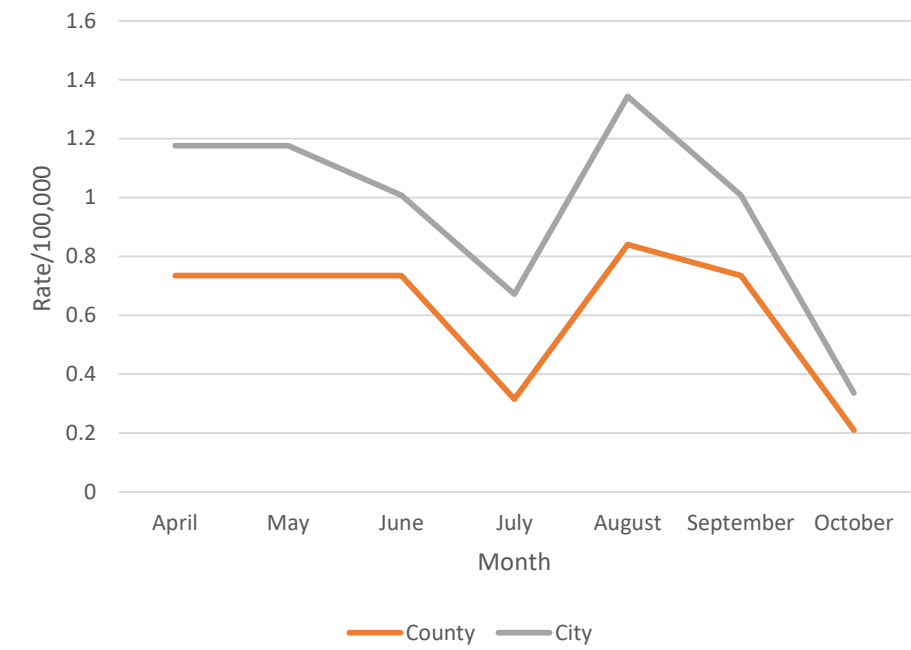


Figure 3: Monthly comparison of rate of new HIV infections in Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee, using data obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Numbers are provisional and subject to change.

For statewide HIV data, visit: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hiv/data.htm>

Syphilis Surveillance

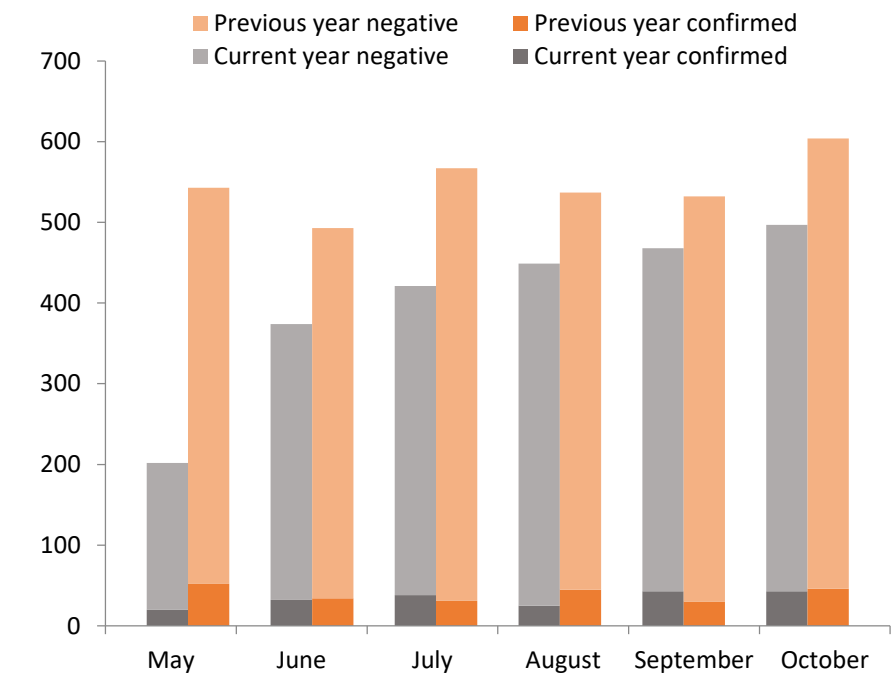


Figure 4: Monthly comparison of syphilis data with year over year comparisons.

Number of specimens screened at MHD, darker bars represent confirmed tests.

Gonorrhea Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing

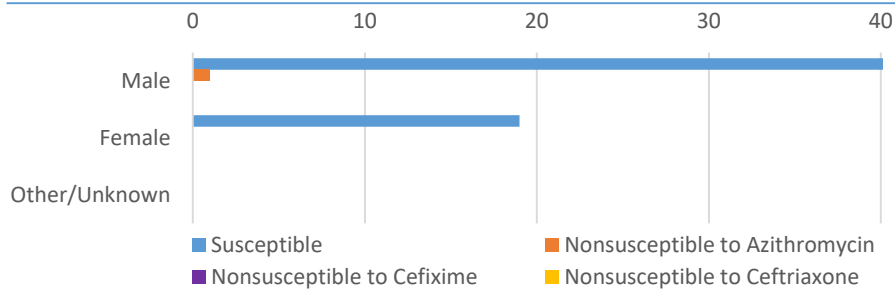


Figure 5: Antibiotic susceptibility profile of Gonorrhea isolates identified in males and females. In October 2020, 1 of 64 cultures tested were found to be nonsusceptible to Azithromycin according to CLSI guidelines. MHD tests for antibiotic resistance to Azithromycin, Ceftriaxone, Cefixime and Gentamicin.

Sexually Transmitted Infections by Source

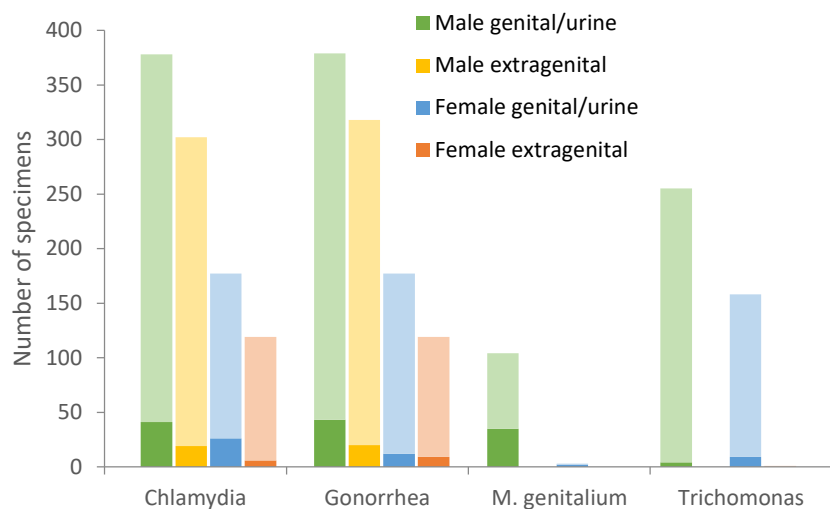


Figure 6: Distribution of STIs detected using NAAT. In October 2020, 8.8% of male and 10.8% of female specimens screened were positive for Chlamydia. 9.0% of male and 7.1% of female specimens were positive for Gonorrhea. 33.7% of male and 2 of the 3 female specimens were positive for *M. genitalium*. 1.6% of male specimens and 5.7% of female specimens were positive for *Trichomonas*.

Note: Darker bars indicate positive specimens.

Viral Surveillance

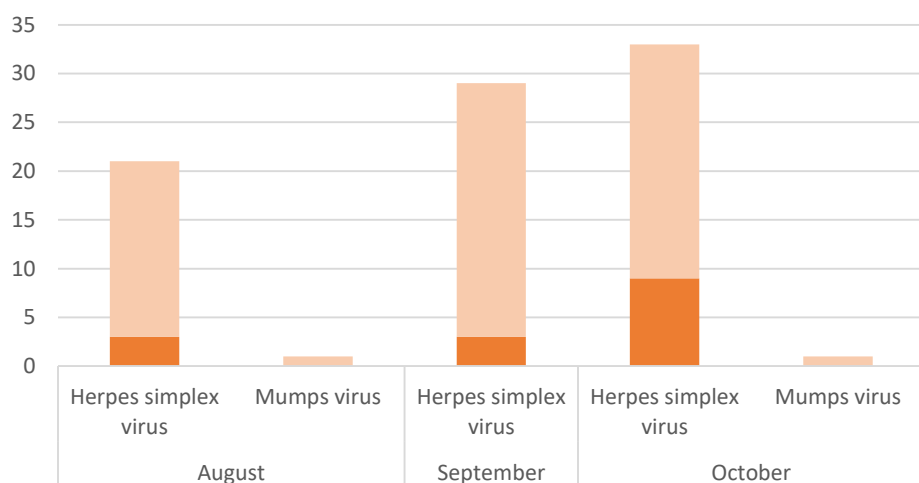


Figure 7: Specimens tested using molecular methods.

Note: Height of bar indicates number of specimens tested.

Darker bars indicate DNA/RNA detected by virus culture, real-time PCR and/or nucleotide sequencing analysis.

Legionella Testing

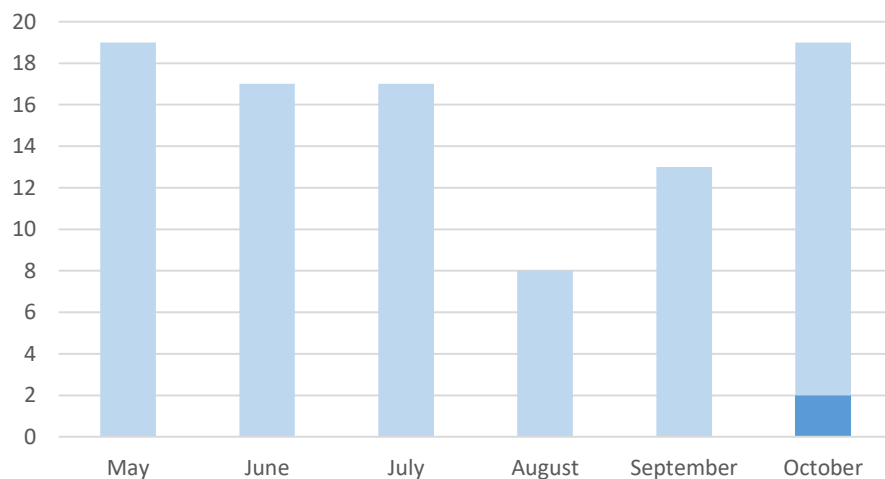


Figure 8: Clinical specimens tested using culture and molecular methods.

*MHDL is one of the **CDC ELITE** certified sites for environmental *Legionella* testing. See the Winter 2019 issue of the [APHL Bridges newsletter](#) for more information.

*Note: Darker bars indicate confirmed *Legionella pneumophila* by culture and/or real-time PCR.*